

Bellevue Police Department



Auto Theft Prevention

Even with today's busy schedules, we need to stay diligent when it comes to preventing car-related crimes. Auto theft is almost always classified as a crime of opportunity. As such, we need to practice good preventative measures in order to eliminate this opportunity and to make our car less desirable to the criminal.

Why do people steal cars?

The most common reasons are the following:

- **Transportation:** This occurs when a thief needs to get from point A to point B.
- **Joyriding:** Often times juveniles will steal a vehicle merely for the excitement factor.
- **Parts:** Vehicles are stolen for their parts.
- **Resale:** Vehicles will be stolen and sold to unsuspecting victims for profit.

What do I do if my car is stolen?

You must report it immediately to the jurisdiction where the theft occurred and the report must be made in person.

Bellevue Police Department

Crime Prevention Unit

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Auto Theft Prevention Tips

- When leaving your vehicle, lock all the car doors and roll up all the windows.
- Hide your valuables out of sight (leaving valuables in view may make your car more desirable to steal).
- Never hide a set of keys inside the car. This invites a car prowler to become a car thief.
- Parking strategies
 - * Park in well lit areas.
 - * Park where there is high pedestrian traffic.
 - * Park in lots with parking attendants.
- Always turn the car off when you get out of it. Do not leave it running while you get gas, walk over to a mailbox, or use the ATM machine.
- To avoid theft by towing:
 - * Turn wheels towards the curb.
 - * Set the parking brake.
 - * Leave manual transmissions in gear.
- Park inside your garage.
- Consider disabling your vehicle if it will be left for an extended period of time.
- Replace T-shaped door locks with straight ones so that thieves cannot grab them with a tool through a small opening in the window.
- Use your alarm.
- Consider purchasing some of the following after market security items:
 - * A security alarm system that can disable the vehicle if activated.
 - * A Kill switch.
 - * A steering wheel, floor board, gear shift, or tire lock.
 - * A vehicle tracking system such as On-Star or LoJack